

Please change the title of the invention to read as follows ---MLK INHIBITORS FOR THE TREATMENT OF NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS---

Please insert the following section immediately following the Title---

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is divisional of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/156,367, filed September 17, 1998 which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/085,439, filed May 14, 1998, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference herein.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-32 without prejudice.

33. (Amended) A method for assessing a compound's ability to inhibit MLK kinase activity and thereby prevent neuronal cell death occurring in a mammal susceptible to or having a neurological condition, comprising:

(a) administering to an animal an amount of compound under conditions sufficient to allow for proper pharmacodynamic absorption and distribution thereof in the animal; and

(b) determining the physiological status of the animal;

wherein a change in physiological status, when compared to an animal not administered the compound, is indicative of the compound's ability to inhibit MLK kinase activity and thereby prevent neuronal cell death occurring in a mammal susceptible to or having a neurological condition.

34. (Amended) The method of Claim 33, wherein MLK is MLK1, MLK2 or MLK3, or

combinations thereof.

36. (Amended) A method for treating a neurological condition in a mammal in need thereof, comprising administering to the mammal an effective therapeutic amount of a compound that inhibits MLK activity and thereby prevent neuronal cell death occurring in a mammal susceptible to or having neurological condition.

39. (Amended) The method of claim 36, wherein MLK is MLK1, MLK2, or MLK3, or combinations thereof.

41 40. (Amended) A method for preventing neuronal cell death in a mammal susceptible to or having a neurological condition, comprising administering to the mammal in need thereof an effective therapeutic amount of a compound that inhibits MLK activity in a neuronal cell and thereby prevent neuronal cell death occurring in a mammal susceptible to or having a neurological condition.

43. (Amended) A method for treating a neurological disorder in a mammal in need thereof, comprising administering to the mammal an effective therapeutic amount of a compound that inhibits MLK activity and thereby prevent neuronal cell death occurring in a mammal susceptible to or having a neurological condition, wherein the compound is identified by a method for assessing a compound's ability to prevent neuronal cell death occurring in a mammal susceptible to or having a neurological condition, comprising:

- a) contacting a compound with neuronal cells having activated MLK kinase activity;
- and
- b) determining the number of neuronal cells that die;

wherein a decreased number of dead neuronal cells in the presence of the compound compared to the number of dead neuronal cells in the absence of the compound is indicative of the compound's ability to prevent neuronal cell death occurring in a mammal susceptible to or having a neurological condition.